

# DREAM A LITTLE BIGGER!

by Elizabeth Kuhn

**Why do we humans have this tendency to expect the worst? We can always imagine what a bad day would look like, and we know what it feels like to fail to meet our targets at the end of the month. Perhaps it is simply a lack of imagination. We know what disappointment feels like and sometimes we find it hard to visualise what a better outcome looks and feels like.**

Instead of indulging in gloomy thoughts, imagine what consistently hitting your milk target would be like, or achieving a higher bracket on your milk price incentive for improved milk quality. Imagine your herd with improved fertility figures and only a handful of cows in your so-called “sick, lame, and lazy” group. I’m painting a rosy picture that may be very different from the current realities on-farm. However, if I can plant the seed of possibility in your mind after you have finished this article, then I have achieved what I intended!

There can be no reward without risk. The investment banking industry is based mainly on this principle. While there may be investment options that carry different levels of risk, it is often the low-risk options that deliver consistent returns in the long run. How can you, as a farmer, take calculated risks to move your business forward and reap the rewards as you progress?

## **FIND THE BOTTLENECKS ON YOUR FARM**

Bottlenecks are any obstructions on-farm that reduce cow or farm efficiency. Reduced efficiency will ultimately





# DREAM BIG

cost you money. The time and money spent treating sick cows with compromised immunity far outweigh the cost of supporting a healthy and productive herd. Inefficient systems or staff conflict that has to be dealt with are other possible bottlenecks on-farm. Identifying these bottlenecks allows you to zoom in and fix them.

## HAVE A PLAN

A focused plan ensures that you will stay committed to seeing it through. Focus on the biggest bottleneck causing you the worst headache and create a workable plan to solve it. Once you have dealt with this bottleneck, you can move on to the next one. Slowly, you will gain momentum, improving the efficiency flow on-farm.

## ASSESS YOUR RISK AND WEIGH IT AGAINST THE POTENTIAL REWARD

Steady returns do not necessarily carry high risk. The scientific community supporting the dairy industry invests a lot of capital and time into reducing risk for the companies and farmers they represent. This comes in the form of research and proven results in a variety of environments. I am talking about the crucial *P*-value. Recap on this in one of my previous articles, “Strategic decisions for better returns: the four R’s”, published in the December 2020 issue of *The Dairy Mail*, pages 64–67. A good *P*-value of  $P < 0,05$  indicates that there is a 95% chance of success in achieving desired outcomes when using a product, ultimately reducing your risk.

## STOP, RE-EVALUATE, AND READJUST

It is important to stick to a plan of action, but like all good plans, it may need to be adjusted from time to time to ensure you are still on the right path. Stop and evaluate whether your plan and the risk taken have yielded rewards. Have you given the process enough time to show a return? If so, then what do you want to stick with, what not, and what is the next goal you are working towards? It is acceptable to readjust where necessary in order to reach your goal. As long as there is constant growth and progress, your business is moving forward.

## CONCLUSION

I challenge you to imagine a better reality, to lose your fear of risk, and not to be complacent about just getting by. Take risks, even small ones, to unlock new growth and success in your business. Dream a little bigger. [mpo](#)

